

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 6, with the following amended paragraph:

The following are related and co-pending U.S. patent applications: application serial No. 09/274,078, entitled "Flexible Cross-connect with Data Plane," filed on March 22, 1999 (now U.S. Patent No. 6,587,470, issued July 1, 2003), application serial No. 09/478,287, entitled "Automatic Propagation of Information in a Communications Network," filed on January 5, 2000; application serial No. 09/487,366, entitled "Method and Shortest Path Tree Algorithm to Support Routing of Paths for Virtual Path Protected Circuits in SONET Networks," filed on January 18, 2000 (now U.S. Patent No. 6,765,880, issued July 20, 2004); application serial No. 09/444,052, entitled "Healing of Incomplete Circuits in Networks," filed on November 19, 1999 (now U.S. Patent No. 6,697,856, issued February 24, 2004); application entitled "Network Management Systems that Receive Cross Connect and/or Other Circuit Information from Network Element," ~~with attorney docket number M-7608-CER1018,~~ of which Suhas Mansingh and Wayne Cannon are the inventors, and which was filed on May 31, 2000 and issued on June 15, 2004, as U.S. Patent No. 6,751,660. All of the aforementioned applications are incorporated herein by referenced in their entirety, but are not admitted to be prior art. The following published standards are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety: GR-253-CORE, and ANSI T1.105.